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# GARLINGTON

FRANK PRENTICE RAND

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# **G A R L I N G T O W N**

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# **G A R L I N G T O W N**

**FRANK PRENTICE RAND**



**THE CORNHILL COMPANY  
BOSTON**

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# GARLINGTON

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# GARLINGTON

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## THE SINGER

His heart has heard the singing  
Of brooks and bees and birds;  
He knows the chattels clinging  
To hackneyed, human words.

He feels through all his numbers  
The nagging throbs of thought;  
His lightest measure lumbers  
With fancies feebly wrought.

He seeks to ease the burnings  
Which some assuage in tears;  
He fain would still the yearnings  
Of wistful, weary years.

He sings, with deep misgiving  
And oft in minor key,  
Of love — the lure of living,  
Of death — the mystery.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### IN SUGAR-TIME

It's sugar-time in Garlingtown,  
As all her children know;  
For strange, sweet yearnings waken  
When sap begins to flow,  
And brooks break forth in crystal spray,  
And sunshine melts the snow.

It's sugar-time in Garlingtown,  
For spring is in the air;  
And all her sons are stalwart,  
And all her daughters fair,  
As lustily from dawn till dark  
They make the syrup there.

It's sugar-time in Garlingtown,  
And maples, gnarled and old,  
May hear their mighty heart-beats  
In buckets manifold:  
Again the ancient miracle,  
The mystery untold.

It's sugar-time in Garlingtown,  
And still, methinks, I see  
Four hands upon a bucket,  
And two belonged to me.  
The sweetest yield in Garlingtown  
Was nothing from a tree.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### CRITERIA

Five farms beyond the church! A yellow house,  
And near a bridge! He's wanting help I hear,  
And if you suit each other, there you are.  
What's that?

No, no, I don't believe I can.  
Things look uncertain. Grain is mighty dear.  
And then I said, you know, your rates are high.  
I reckon I can mosey on a bit  
The way I be.

Your dinner? That's all right.  
You more than earned the stuff you ate I guess.  
You'll find the house beside the bridge you know,  
The yellow house. Good-bye!

It does a mite;  
But those clouds there will scurry to the north  
Around the hill, I judge. The wind is wrong  
For rain to-day.

The same to you! Good-bye!

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Well, Bubby, you've been hanging round enough.  
Your chickens need some water.

Hey? What's that?  
You wanted him to stay?

He could, you say!  
If that ain't like a youngster! Wiggle them!  
At dinner, too! And during grace I'll bet.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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See here, you rogue, you wanted me to keep  
That fellow there, and pay him all we make,  
Because you liked to see him wag his ears?  
Jerushy, what a little fool you be!  
You'd have us in the poor-house, long with Tim,  
And old Aunt Sade, whose man drunk up her home  
And left her nothing but a crib of debts.  
It 'pears that boys don't ever stop to think  
That money don't come tramping down like rain.

Why yes, he done quite smart. He kept his row  
Along with Lish and me.

What's that you say?

I didn't say he didn't hoe it well.  
He done it mod'rately; not half so bad  
As you were doing round those hills of beans  
Across the garden; not as bad as that.  
But then you must remember, Bub, he came  
At ten o'clock. He didn't stand up straight,  
But crooked his back to hoe. He'd been right lame  
By supper time, I guess. Of course he might . . .  
Sometimes you find a man . . .

He said he had?

You mustn't swallow everything you hear.  
Tut, tut, Bub, tut! He maybe told the truth.  
Sometimes they do, these chaps. I only said  
You mustn't swallow everything you hear.  
It's safer not to — even folks you know.



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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Now, Bub, I'll tell you something, something  
true

And worth your heeding. It's between us two;  
You needn't mention it to even Lish;  
It's confidential twixt the boy and me.  
The reason why I turned that fellow down  
Was simply this. He made it out to me  
That he was handy all about a farm,  
A first-rate man who knows what he is at,  
And charged accordingly. And then at noon  
He came up to the barn, allowed 'twould rain,  
Dropped down his traps, and didn't clean his hoe.  
A hoe will rust unless you keep it clean.  
He didn't know, or else he didn't care:  
That's why I didn't want him. Understand?

We'll get a fellow bye and bye, my boy,  
A bang-up good one, wiggle ears or no.  
You mustn't mind such foolish things. Now  
scoot,

And fetch some water for your little chicks;  
And I will go and clean the fellow's hoe;  
And you and I will take a trip to town  
And get the horses shod. That suit you, Bub?

Well scoot then, quick, and water up your hens.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### THE RAIN

At last the rain!  
Tumultuously it pelts against the pane;  
It summons every dripping roof and tree  
To join the vast, torrential symphony;  
It bids the mighty thunders crash and roll  
In measures stirring to the sagging soul;  
The air becomes a silver, singing skein  
With strings of rain.

At last the rain!  
A storm of rescue for the stricken grain!  
The ground soaks strength through every tiny  
    pore  
And waits beneath the heavy clouds for more;  
Each fainting plant in drenching deluge ret  
With panting leaves rejoices in the wet;  
The arid pastures breathe no more in pain,  
Aflood with rain.

At last the rain!  
We watch it falling in the misty lane.  
Each gutter has become a roiling stream;  
The cows trail home in clouds of sweaty steam;  
Relief has come; the deadly drought has past;  
The dread of many days is gone at last;  
Our summer labor has not been in vain.  
At last the rain!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### REUNION

Her heart had borne an unfamiliar pain,  
As though by some instinctive sense she knew  
The toil and peril he was passing through  
Far distant from her stall. Her tangled mane  
Still felt the soft caresses of his hand  
That cold gray morn, when, as he said good-bye  
And lingered lovingly with troubled eye,  
She felt his mood but could not understand.

And now, when he has grown no longer real  
But like a dream of frolic, colt-free days —  
When he himself was just a romping lad —  
She hears outside a craunching wagon wheel  
And laughing shouts, and then — ah, then she  
    lays  
Her nose against his shoulder, and is glad.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### THE RECRUIT

The sun has set in banks of cloud;  
The night is cold.

I love it all so well:  
Each gray, rain-beaten, monumental wall;  
The rocky lane; the tall, ancestral elm  
Whose palsied branches lie against the sky;  
The stable, snug with warmth of mow and stall;  
The cattle, widely known throughout the realm  
By quaint, Scotch names: 'tis hard to say good-  
bye  
To all I love so well.

Beyond the pasture brook,  
Not distant from the bridge, yet well apart  
From crooked paths which trace the grazing  
ground,  
There is a native cloister, sacred now,  
Where oft, your precious letters to my heart,  
A sweet communion, Dearest, I have found;  
I went to-day, and paid a parting vow —  
And came across the brook.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Our dreams and plans, how frail!  
I thought to bring you here, ay long ago;  
Then came the storm — the shock, and then  
    suspense,  
And then at last, Dear Heart, our country's call.  
What lies ahead for you I cannot know,  
At best long days with aching dread intense;  
But life itself is venture after all,  
    And dreams are always frail.

I pass the silent gates.  
The wagon wheels are crunching on the snow.  
The road lies open, on, and on, and on  
To desperate deeds — not dreams that drive men  
    mad.  
I see the faintest flush of afterglow  
Beyond the elm, a token of the morn.  
Till then, dear home, good-night! I am not sad  
    As now I pass the gates.

The sun has set in banks of cloud;  
The night is cold.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### THE EMPTY FLAG

She lives alone. About her latticed door  
The roses bloom, and marigolds, and flox,  
And pinks, and marjorams, and hollyhocks;  
They are her friends; she has and seeks no more.  
The neighbors watch her sweet and hermit ways,  
And wonder kindly whence and why she came,  
But all they yet have learned is just her name.  
She moves like one who lives in other days.

But in the seaport where her tale is told  
The men still point at ebb-tide to a reef  
And, dimly seen, a lone, projecting spar.  
She too, in absence sees them, unconsolated;  
And in her chamber, emblem of her grief,  
There hangs a service flag, without a star.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### HIGHLAND HOPE

Whan ye come hame again, laddie,  
    Whan ye come hame again —  
Whate'er the time of year may be,  
The birds and brooks will sing wi' me,  
And dancing daisies on the lea  
    Will nod their heads and ken,  
    My laddie,  
Whan ye come hame again.

Whan ye come hame again, laddie,  
    Whan ye come hame again —  
Although your form sae straight and fair  
Be mangled weel beyond repair,  
I shall nae see, nae mickle care;  
    My love sic wrack can men',  
    My laddie,  
Whan ye come hame again.

Whan ye come hame again, laddie,  
    Whan ye come hame again —  
Each common thing about the place,  
And maist of a' my blithesome face,  
Will wear a new and bonnie grace  
    For you, my prince of men,  
    My laddie,  
Whan ye come hame again.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### GOOD-BYE

A few dead leaves on the mountain oak,  
And a weary wind!

Dear Heart, I understand.  
For, though in trivial talk you seek  
To hide your love-lit loyalty,  
The light hair blown across your cheek,  
The wistful beauty of your face,  
And every poise of girlish grace,  
Reveal your call to me.

Yet, as I watch your hand  
Point to yon eagle soaring high,  
And long to take it in my own,  
There comes from out the sunset sky  
The call of wayward, world-worn men —  
Yea, even now, Dear Heart, again —  
And I must go, alone.

We loved the west wind well,  
And oft have climbed this rock-bare crest  
With faces sunlit from the west,  
To greet our faithful, fleet-free friend.  
And now he bids me linger still,  
To dwell with maiden, wind, and hill



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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Till fevered fancies end.

Dear Heart, how sweet the spell!  
My trembling lips would seal the dream  
And pledge our lives to wood and stream,  
Did not that clear call haunt me yet;  
But you must stay, and I must go;  
And still the western wind will blow,  
Lest ever we forget.

Look, Love — the evening star!  
And we might wander on and on  
With buoyant step from dusk till dawn  
With that bright mystic star above,  
Avoid the frantic mid-day strife,  
And journey hand in hand through life  
In pilgrimage of love.

Ay, but we look too far;  
For see — a twinkle by the pond,  
Another, and still more beyond,  
And myriads, Dear, beyond our ken.  
Shine on, fair star, but my lone way  
Leads to the glamor of the day,  
Back to the streets of men.

Dearest of Hearts, good-bye.  
How often we have parted, you and I,  
As comrades of the morning wave adieu  
And think how sweetly welcome will repay!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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It was not thus — to feel your eyes of blue  
Stare blankly into mine, and turn away.

No word! No tear! No sigh!  
And now, Brave Heart, good-bye.

A few dead leaves on the mountain oak,  
And a weary wind!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS

I've got so many questions  
I want to ask about,  
But nobody will listen;  
I'm almost tuckered out.  
Coz first I went to Mamma,  
An' set beside the sink,  
An' ast if leaves can visit,  
An' if the grass can think.  
But she said not to bother  
Coz she had got to bake;  
An' Ma don't answer questions, when  
— She's burned her cake.

I went to find my daddy,  
An' he was in the shed,  
An' fixin' ropes an' pulleys  
For somethin' overhead.  
I climbed up in a buggy  
An' ast him if he knew  
What makes the lightnin' thunder,  
An' makes the bluebirds blue.  
But he ist lost his temper  
An' banged about the bench;  
An' Pa don't answer questions, when  
— He's lost his wrench.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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An' 'en I found the hired man  
A long ways down the lane,  
An' mowin' by his lonesome,  
An' wishin' it would rain.  
I follered on an' ast him  
If he would tell me please  
Why people call it honey,  
An' call 'em honey-bees.  
But he ist swore an' told me  
To keep my yapper shut;  
An' Joe don't answer questions, when  
— His scythe won't cut.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### THE OLD ACADEMY

With painful care he climbed the pasture wall.  
Behind him lay the drowsy, village street,  
The dusty common, parched in dog-day heat,  
The sagging sheds, and silence over all.  
Across the square, the school; its oaken door  
Now tightly locked; above the noble elm  
Its lofty tower, seen throughout the realm,  
A monument to fair, forgotten lore!

The old man paused with backward look, until  
He seemed to hear again a fiddle's strain,  
And through the moonlight, dancers' laughter  
    gay;  
He then poked on, and found upon the hill  
A pile of rocks, and with his shiny cane  
He tapped each one, and smiled, and went his  
    way.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### BLUEBERRIES

Upon the hills of Garlingtown  
Beneath the summer sky,  
In many pleasant pastures  
On sunny slopes and high,  
Their skins abloom with dusty blue,  
Asleep, the berries lie.

And all the lads of Garlingtown,  
And all the lasses too,  
Still climb the tranquil hillsides,  
A merry, barefoot crew;  
Still homeward plod with unfilled pails  
And mouths of berry blue.

And all the birds of Garlingtown,  
When flocking back to nest,  
Remember well the patches  
Where berries are the best;  
They pick the ripest ones at dawn  
And leave the lads the rest.

Upon the hills of Garlingtown  
When berry-time was o'er,  
I looked into the sunset,  
And saw an open door,  
And from the hills of Garlingtown  
I went, and came no more.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### HIS ANSWER

What, sell my cows? Did you say sell my cows?  
The wife has put you up to this I know.  
She's set upon it. Well, we'll watch them browse  
And lick their salt a bit before we go.

Just see that yearling there beside the firs:  
Back straighter than a string, and rump held  
high;

You'll never handle softer skin than hers,  
And you can see her withers, head and eye.  
She's slick and trim I say; and here's her twin,  
Both born the self-same week; and that one  
there —

Well, them that know have picked her out to win;  
I rather think she's better than the pair.

You didn't know they were so nice, you say.  
Of course not. Well, for over fifty years  
I've bred this strain to what you see to-day,  
And started out with nothing — scrubs; but  
here's,  
Here's something worth your pains. And now  
you come,  
You and the wife, and say, "Sell out the herd."

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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I'll never do it, neighbor. No, by gum!  
And you may tell her that's my final word.

You say I'm losing money. Well I know  
That market milk no longer pays us here,  
May never pay again; but even so,  
The cattle bought my farm, and now it's clear  
With something in the bank to mend a fence;  
The girls have grown and gone; there was no boy;  
I've sweat and scrimped, and now for recompense  
You'd take away the thing I most enjoy.  
I'll foot the bill, in cash and labor too,  
For now and then an hour on this hill  
With pipe and cattle and — the sunset view.

That bull will make a record; wait until  
He gets his growth; I pray that I may live  
To milk his daughter by that heifer there.  
I've never told the price I had to give  
To buy that chap; I really shouldn't care  
To have it reach the wife. She doesn't see —  
She never did, not from our wedding day —  
How much this herd of livestock means to me;  
I'm sorry too, more so than I can say.

I've tramped this pasture over till I know  
Each path and water-hole and hiding-place;



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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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I've hunted calves in sun and rain and snow,  
And some of them put up a pretty chase  
Before I got them home. And as for tales —  
I've shot a bobcat from these very rocks;  
The hill's alive with deer and coons and quails;  
The last time that I came I saw a fox.  
This slope was forest once — a heavy growth;  
I sold the pine and burned, and bye and bye  
The feed came in. And I shall keep them both,  
The pasture and the cattle, till I die.

Old men there are who sell and settle down,  
And sit beside a stove and mope and fret;  
But I shall never move my bones to town  
Until my brain grows soft and I forget.  
I have a foolish whim that maybe death  
Will take me here, from this old mountain dome;  
I'd call the cattle with my dying breath,  
And hear them coming as I turned towards home.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### MEMORIAL

He scrawled his name upon the milk-room door,  
And left for camp. His father waited near,  
The boy's sure, easy laughter in his ear,  
His cast-off overalls upon the floor.  
The old man waved, and watched with poignant  
pride.

"He'll never mind the bullets much," he said;  
"I've seen him oft with bees about his head  
Mow out his swath and never step aside."

Then months and years! With feebler sight each  
day

The old man traced the name across the door;  
And once a neighbor thought he heard him moan.  
The man and name were fading slow away.  
And then the father came to read no more;  
Nor came the son. The name remained alone.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### WHICH?

Clementine of Garlingtown —  
Eyes of morning gray,  
Fair and calm and steadfast  
Like the hills in May,  
Breathing light and laughing hope  
Like the break of day!

Dorothy of Garlingtown —  
Daughter of the sun,  
Brown with golden beauty,  
Full of vagrant fun,  
Driving home the dreamy cows  
When the day was done!

Winnabel of Garlingtown —  
Not inclined to roam,  
Dressed in checkered gingham,  
Arms in sudsy foam,  
Versed in all the dainty arts  
Of the happy home!

Hopkinson of Garlingtown  
Thought, and thought, and thought.  
Which should be his lady:  
Clem, or Belle, or Dot?  
All the girls are married now —  
Hopkinson is not.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### DISCHARGED

“ I’m home again. Is supper ready, Ma? ”

He wormed his way from out his winter wraps,  
And washed with knotted fingers at the sink,  
Brushed back his hair before the clouded glass,  
And sank down wearily into his chair.

“ Dear Lord,” he prayed, “ We thank Thee for  
this food  
And ask that Thou wilt bless it to our use.  
Amen.”

He helped them both to pork and beans.

“ Well, Ma,” his tone was tense; “ They’ve  
kicked me out.

“ For twenty years I’ve tended fires there,  
Three times a day from apple-time till June;  
And swept the rooms, and shovelled off the snow,  
And washed the windows, and erased the boards,  
And mended broken desks and seats and such;  
They used to say there warn’t no other man  
Could tinker up those little things like me.  
And now I’m chucked.”

He added bitterly,

“ I never lost a job this way before;

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Just told to quit."

His wife had reached across  
To pat his hand to tell him of her love,  
But he withdrew as though he had not seen,  
All fearful lest the touch should break him down  
And make him seem unmanly in her sight.

"It came like this. That new man come-to-town  
Walks in to-day with young Darymple's boy,  
And looks around the way he always does.  
The teachers and the children all had gone,  
And I was lugging baskets through the hall,  
And up he struts and says ' Good-afternoon.'  
' Good-afternoon,' says I, and turned to go.  
' Hold on,' says he; ' I guess that after this  
We'll let this fellow have your job.' And then  
I sorter looked at him, not certain quite —  
I hadn't thought of such a thing, you see;  
And then he said it all so sudden like.  
' You mean,' says I, ' that I give him the keys? '  
' Exactly that,' says he. And then — well, then  
I gave them up, and gathered up my duds,  
And went and got the milk, and here I be."

He had not touched his food, but now he took  
His cup of tea and drank it at a gulp.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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“ It hurt me just a little mite,” he said.  
“ You see I’d thought that maybe, now I’d kept  
The job so long and knew the stoves so well  
And grown too old for any heavy work,  
Perhaps they’d let me keep along with it  
Until I died. It didn’t pay me much,  
But still enough, beside the pension fee,  
To keep us fed and warm, just you and me.  
I’d thought that it would see us through.  
But now — ”

He pushed aside his cup and plate,  
And struggled to his feet, and fumbling, reached  
For coat and cap. “ If Jim had only lived,”  
He murmured, starting from the room.

“ I’ve got to go and feed the hens,” he said.

She rose and caught his arm, a tearful smile  
Of comfort on her worn and tender face.  
“ The Lord will not forsake us now,” she said.

He kissed her hair, went out, and shut the door.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### WEEDS

My work is weeds; the one thing I can do.  
There's nothing meaner than a witch-grass stem;  
I've tried and tried to rid the place of them;  
You break one off and simply make it two.  
This garden is my stint. The doctor said  
It would be good for me — the fool — as though  
We didn't need what even I can grow  
To keep the armies of the nation fed.

The others now must till the fields of corn,  
And roam the earth, and sail the seas and streams,  
And risk their lives in wild and daring deeds;  
But I am old, and stiff, and weary-worn,  
And nearly deaf, and fret with ancient dreams;  
Yet still I live, for still I have my weeds.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### AT NIGHTFALL

Come and grind your scythes to-night,  
Lusty lads with arms of brown,  
Prompt to start with breaking light  
For the fields of Garlingtown;  
For the grain is ripe to falling,  
And the harvest loud is calling,  
Calling, calling,  
Calling you,  
To the fields of Garlingtown.

Put away your scythes to-night,  
Loyal lads with arms of brown,  
Prompt to start with breaking light  
From the fields of Garlingtown;  
For the homes of men are falling,  
And humanity is calling,  
Calling, calling,  
Calling you,  
To the front from Garlingtown.

Steel your stalwart souls to-night,  
Brave young lads with arms of brown,  
Prompt to start with breaking light  
Farther still from Garlingtown;



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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Though the stars themselves be falling,  
Life and destiny are calling,  
    Calling, calling,  
    Calling you,  
To a fairer Garlingtown.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### A WEDDING EVE

Forgive me, sweet Janette. I did not dream —  
How could I dream — of this.

The whip-poor-will  
Is calling from the lane, his plaintive note  
An echo from my heart. It was not so  
Those dear, glad, summer evenings long ago  
When hand in hand we talked of coming years  
In happy hope, and sought them for our own;  
So good they seemed, so beautiful, so sure.  
With laughing lips you mocked the doleful bird;  
And then I whistled softly, calling him,  
Until he came and sang upon the wall.  
And now he calls to me, to me alone.

Do you remember too? And are you near,  
Always as near me as you seem to-night  
Here in the shadows? Ah, and do you know  
This thing that is to be?

Those gracious years,  
How drab they soon became! How dull and mean  
This fertile farm that seemed all loveliness  
That evening long ago. Yet I have done  
As well as many men, in farmers' terms  
As well perhaps as either of us hoped  
That night when every plan was tinted rose.  
My aim was modest, quite within my reach;  
And men have praised my work, and left me pleased.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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Oh, stupid fool, and blind! The bird to-night,  
Restoring perfectly one vanished hour,  
Has stripped the picture of its tinsel charm  
And made me see the failure of my life:  
Far distant from their home, two rebel boys;  
And in the village yard, a grave; and here,  
A lonely man.

And yet what could I do?  
It was a case of stintless strife or wreck;  
There was no middle course — or so it seemed—  
And if the first should fail, then either way  
Disaster in the end. So year by year  
The farm demanded more, and ever more,  
And doggedly we fed it with our lives,  
Till beauty disappeared, we knew not when,  
And love was crowded, stifled, to the wall,  
And here I am, alone, alone.

Alone?

I had forgotten.

Well, but after all  
A man must live, and do his task, and die.  
It was not fame or pleasure which I sought;  
Nor do I seek them now. I simply do  
The thing I can. And truly I have tried  
To run the farm, my darling, since you went,  
As you would wish, with steady heart and hand.  
And I have deadened pain with toil and sleep.

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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To-morrow night!

So much a man can do.  
When two have staggered underneath a load,  
The one alone can never bear it far;  
'Tis not his spirit but his strength that fails.  
And solitude breaks down the spirit, too.

There was no other way. No woman comes  
To do the work upon a lonely farm  
For pay. And yet I proved the thing I knew.

I think she understands.

O sweet Janette,  
That we might start again, and dream again!  
Perchance again we might not blunder so.  
Your home is waiting, waiting for your step,  
And everywhere your dear possessions lie:  
Your faded dresses, and the pots and pans  
Your hands have washed so oft, your sewing chair,  
The cradle, too. I thought I had forgot.  
I thought, forgive me, that those days were dead.

The whip-poor-will is calling, calling still.  
Those precious days!

I wonder, will he sing  
To-morrow night?

Janette, Janette, Janette!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### THE SINGING LEAVES

I am roving to-day with the singing leaves

And the wind that bids them sing:

They tag my heels in a merry chase,

And seek the brook for a fitful race,

And eddy and soar with an airy grace,

Each borne by a fairy wing.

I am seeking my strength from the singing leaves

And the wind that bids them sing:

For they lull the weary mind to rest,

Until it wakes with a keener zest

To trail the truth to the ultimate test

Of human reckoning.

I am baring my heart to the singing leaves

And the wind that bids them sing:

I dream of the lure of the Hidden Way,

And I hear the call of the active day —

A love like prayer and a work like play

In the peace and the joy they bring.

I am taking my hope from the singing leaves

And the wind that bids them sing:

They carol of yester years to me,

They tell of the years that are yet to be,

They charge me shape my destiny

And be ready to greet the spring.

THE DREAD

She tip-toed from the bedroom, lamp in hand,  
And softly closed the door. A little while  
She waited, listening, beside the hearth;  
But naught she heard, save now and then the  
    wind,  
And distant creakings in the rambling house  
Now wracked in winter's cold, and always too  
The dreary ticking of the marble clock  
Upon the mantel shelf. She strained her ear  
For other sounds, in vain. And then the lamp  
Began to tremble in her line-stained hand,  
Her knees became unsteady, and she sat,  
Surprised to find her strength should fail her now  
When all was past. The dimly-lighted lamp  
Shed lurid shadows over all the room;  
It had not seemed like this the other nights,  
While sitting, waiting, hour after hour,  
Half sleeping in her faded easy chair.  
She noticed that the rug was wrinkled up,  
And straightened it again from where she sat.  
She took her Bible from a little stand,  
And opened to a well-thumbed text, and read,  
And knew not what. The house was lonely now —  
The kind of loneliness that chills the blood

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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And chokes the heart. She forced herself to plan  
The work ahead. She knew each mournful move,  
For she had managed all of it before,  
For father, mother, and a baby boy.  
And now again! To-morrow afternoon  
The neighbors would come in with voices hushed  
To do their last, sad service for the dead.  
How strangely fate ordained! That she, so young,  
So fair, so happy, hardly more than bride,  
Should be the one to go! But yesterday,  
It seemed, the smiling lad had brought her home,  
And every one had loved her from the first.  
Her knitting lay upon the table there;  
The older woman took the half-done sock,  
And held it lovingly between her hands.  
Not yet had tears brought sorrowful relief;  
She could not cry; her heart was cramped with  
fear.

She wondered if her husband were aware  
Of that which frightened her; and if she dared  
To tell him of her lurking, haunting dread.  
Her brow was wet with cold, unwholesome sweat;  
But while her body seemed about to fail,  
Her mind was never more alert than now,  
Propounding o'er and o'er one fateful fact.  
When he should hear — the poor, bereavéd boy  
In Picardy — what then? He did not know

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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His wife was ill; how could they write to him  
That she was dead? And he had loved her so;  
The mother feared that he had loved her all.  
When he should read those tender, pain-scrawled  
words,  
Now sealed behind the clock, and eloquent  
With love's unselfish and undying faith,  
Ah then — the mother knew her son; she knew  
A cross of honor might come back to her,  
But never he. What should she, could she, do!  
She heard the sound of sleigh-bells in the yard;  
DeWitt had got the doctor there at last.  
With fevered will she hurried to the door  
To light the way. They entered silently,  
And read her message in her troubled face.  
“Too late,” she moaned; and once again, “Too  
late.”



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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### GODSPEED

Lads who have shouldered the gun,  
Hunters of perilous game,  
Argonauts trailing the Hun,  
Knights in Columbia's name,  
All of our prayers are for you;  
God bring you homeward again,  
Victors untarnished and true,  
Heroes who conquered like men.

Long have we chafed from afar,  
Hating the ways of the foe;  
Now with the morning star,  
Smiling, we bid you go.  
Lads who are ardent for right,  
Lads who are scornful of sin,  
Show them how gentlemen fight,  
Show them how gentlemen win.

Many are taken aghast:  
Hearts that are shaken with tears,  
Brains that are baffled at last,  
Souls that are stricken with fears.  
Doubts? Let them others assail!  
Deeds and a dream are for you.  
Do, that the dream may prevail;  
Dream, that the deeds may be true.

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# G A R L I N G T O W N

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## FORECAST

*January, 1918*

A dusk of dreary day,  
No star in sight;  
A road of frozen clay,  
A sky, portentous, gray,  
And soon, the night!

A darkness, deadly deep,  
All landmarks gone;  
A storm of snow-whirled sweep,  
A strife with wind and sleep,  
And then, the dawn!

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# G A R L I N G T O W N

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## ITALIA

*November, 1917*

And thou, beloved Italia, can it be  
That now, thy gallant armies foiled and spent,  
Thy tearful land the prey to ravishment,  
The hand of ruthless ravage falls on thee?  
That savage hordes with insolence malign,  
Would fain resume their fierce ancestral lust  
And trample in the vile and sodden dust  
In one mad hour the beauty of thy shrine?

O Rome, our mother, have we broken faith,  
Unworthy of the trust we hold so dear,  
Grown soft and stupid, sitting in the sun,  
That now thy sacred fane must suffer scathe,  
While panting voices, fraught with ancient fear,  
Pass on the cry of old — The Hun! The Hun!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### WEARINESS

Weary my heart to-night!

And yet 'tis evening now, serene and still;  
A summer evening, too; so sweet, so fair,  
The breath of wind which cometh from the hill  
Is like the murmur of untroubled prayer.  
The maple leaves but whisper from their rest;  
The mist is on the meadows — moonlit all;  
And somewhere in the dusk a night-bird's nest,  
And somewhere, too, the heart that knows his call.

Weary, so weary though!

How can such beauty be? At close of day  
Doth nature thus dissuade our souls from strife?  
Or would she soothe our fevered frowns away  
And strengthen us to trust again in life?  
Or doth she nothing know, and nothing care?  
What reck's the star when mortals err and weep?  
My thought was vain. From night, the unaware,  
I hope for naught but slumber, only sleep.

Weary for one away!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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There is no other one, no other, none,  
To come with sunny smile and take her chair;  
There is no other comrade, no, not one,  
With touch so tender or with face so fair.  
How lovely is the night, how soft, how calm!  
The air grows cool at last. The hour is late.  
But still there comes no healing and no balm  
To ease the heart which craves its absent mate.

God, grant to us, Thy children, fond and frail,  
More light, and love, and laughter — lest we fail!

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## G A R L I N G T O W N

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### DEPARTURE

One last, slow walk along the village street,  
One last, long night upon a restless bed,  
One last, poor struggle with a tousled sheet,  
A weary gasp, and lo my friend is dead.

Ah, where is now the warm clasp of his hand?  
And where the lustre of his shining eye?  
Beside the death-bed I who loved him stand  
And blindly wonder what it means to die.

Above the distant hills the evening star  
Is like a beacon on a shoreless sea;  
The path it faintly lights leads straight and far,  
But where within that silent realm is he?

Alone he went upon his mystic way,  
Without a comrade sought the vast unknown;  
He even cast aside his case of clay;  
The spirit stripped for flight and went alone.

But did he venture forth in trembling fear?  
Ah, strangely no. It rather seemed to me  
He gladly left the life he once held dear  
To test the mettle of the Yet-to-be.













